

Message Text

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12

ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8187

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 17619

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, ETRN

SUBJ: WORLD BANK LOAN TO FINANCE SECOND PORT

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED AN ARTICLE IN THE BANGKOK POST OF NOVEMBER 9 QUOTED THE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMUNICATIONS, DR. SIRILAK, AS SAYING THAT THE WORLD BANK HAD OFFERED A LARGE LOAN TO FINANCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DEEP SEA PORT AT LAEM CHABANG. END UNCLASSIFIED

2. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE AN OFFICIAL OF THE WORLD BANK TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THERE IS NOTHING IN THE STORY AT ALL, THAT THE WORLD BANK SEES NO NEED FOR A NEW DEEP WATER PORT IN THE

IMMEDIATE FUTURE. WORLD BANK BELIEVES THAT THE PORT OF SATTIHIP COULD BE USED FOR THE EXPORT OF BULK COMMODITIES. HE DID NOT SPECULATE ON WHY DR. SIRILAK SHOULD HAVE MADE THE STATEMENTS HE DID, ASSUMING HE WAS QUOTED CORRECTLY.

3. COMMENT: MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, AFTER LENGTHY STUDY OF SATTIHIP VS LAEM CHABANG ALTERNATE PORT SITES, DECIDED IN FAVOR OF LATTER AND MADE RECOMMENDATION TO PREVIOUS CABINET WHICH ENDORSED DECISION IN PRINCIPLE JUST PRIOR TO ITS OVERTHROW. KEY FACTOR IN FORMER MINISTRY'S DECISION WAS CONCLUSION THAT ROYAL THAINAVY WOULD BE AS DIFFICULT TO MOVE OUT OF SATTIHIP WHEN
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TIME FOR EXPANSION CAME AS ROYAL THAI AIR FORCE HAS PROVEN

TO BE AT DON MUANG COMBINED CIVIL-MILITARY AIRPORT.

4. IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBOFFS, BOTH SIRILAK AND NEW COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER ADMIRAL CHALIE HAVE INDICATED PREVIOUS CABINET'S APPROVAL OF LAEM CHABANG REMAINS RTG POLICY. UNLESS LATTER SERIOUSLY CHALLENGED BY LEADING FIGURE WITHIN NEW GOVERNMENT OR BY IMPORTANT PRESSURE GROUP, ANTICIPTE LIP SERVICE, AT LEAST, WILL BE PAID LAEM CHABANG UNTIL ELECTED GOVERNMENT REPLACES PRESENT REGIME SOMETIME LATER NEGP YEAR. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
UNGER

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